

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Dakota employers experience military flight

By Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen
SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Employers of South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers received an up-close look at the responsibilities and training their employees take on while serving in the National Guard by participating in an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Bosslift in Rapid City, Sept. 18.

“The purpose of a Bosslift is to take employers from the workplace to the training site where they can see the type and quality of training their employee receives while their out for military service,” said Maj. Lona Christensen, South Dakota ESGR program director.

The Bosslift hosted 23 employers of National Guard members serving in aviation units as pilots, crew chiefs or mechanics.

While most National Guard Soldiers train one weekend a month and two weeks a year, Soldiers assigned to an aviation company are required additional training to meet annual flight-time requirements.

“I think it’s important that employers are out here so that we can show them what their Soldiers do on the weekend and why we require so much time out of our aviation Soldiers,” said Maj. Michael Flanery, commander of Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment. “It is important for employers to understand how essential our training is to be proficient. We have demanding jobs, other than flying positions, such as maintenance and welding that require perfection in order to fly the aircraft.”

Peter Anderson, owner of MAC Construction in Rapid City, was nominated to attend the Bosslift by his employee Sgt. Matthew Walters, a 189th crew chief.

“I nominated Peter because he supports me every time I need more time off,” said Walters, who has worked as a full-time carpenter for MAC since 2001. “When I came back from my yearlong deployment in 2012 he hired me back right away,” said Walters.

Juggling drill weekends and additional flight time can be a struggle when working to meet project deadlines as a full-time carpenter, said Walters.

“We make it work,” said Anderson. “As long as he gives us a heads up, it is kind of our philosophy to just make it work.”

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Bosslifts give employers like Anderson the chance to get a better understanding of what their employee is specifically assigned to do.

“I’m very impressed with his duties,” said Anderson. “There is a lot more to it than I thought. I didn’t know he was a crew chief that went on every flight.”

Employers were given an orientation flight around the Black Hills on either a UH-60 Black Hawk or UH-72 Lakota following a question and answer session with aviation leadership. They also signed the ESGR Statement of Support, pledging to fully recognize, honor and enforce the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

“I believe the military has accelerated Matt’s key characteristics such as leadership, responsibility and overall maturity,” said Anderson. “We were selfishly disappointed when he deployed, but we understood and supported it. We will continue to support Matt in his military endeavors, and we are grateful for his service to both us and his country.”

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High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard



140918-Z-CW157-081: U.S. Army Maj. Michael Flanery, commander of South Dakota Army National Guard’s Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment, explains the differences between the UH-60 Black Hawk and UH-72 Lakota aircrafts to a group of civilian employers as part of the Employer support of the Guard and Reserve Bosslift, at the Army Aviation Support Facility, Rapid City, S.D., Sept. 18, 2014. Twenty-three employers spent the day learning about their employees National Guard commitment to foster a culture in which all employers support the employment and military service of members of the National Guard and Reserve in the United States. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen/Released)



140918-Z-CW157-299: U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of South Dakota National Guard, and Maj. Lona Christensen, program director, South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard, witness Peter Anderson, owner of MAC Construction, of Rapid City, who employs Sgt. Matthew Walters a crew chief in Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment, sign the Statement of Support as part of the Employer support of the Guard and Reserve Bosslift, at the Army Aviation Support Facility, Rapid City, S.D., Sept. 18, 2014. Twenty-three employers spent the day learning about their employees National Guard commitment to foster a culture in which all employers support the employment and military service of members of the National Guard and Reserve in the United States. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen/Released)



140918-Z-ZZ999-342: South Dakota Army National Guard’s Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment aviation crew, guide employers of SDNARG members onto a UH-60 Black Hawk for a 45-minute flight around the Black Hills as part of the Employer support of the Guard and Reserve Bosslift, at the Army Aviation Support Facility, Rapid City, S.D., Sept. 18, 2014. Twenty-three employers spent the day learning about their employees National Guard commitment to foster a culture in which all employers support the employment and military service of members of the National Guard and Reserve in the United States. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen/Released)



140918-Z-ZZ999-342: U.S. Army Sgt. Matthew Walters, crew chief, South Dakota Army National Guard's Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment opens the door of a UH-60 Black Hawk for employers to exit after a 45-minute flight around the Black Hills as part of the Employer support of the Guard and Reserve Bosslift, at the Army Aviation Support Facility, Rapid City, S.D., Sept. 18, 2014. Twenty-three employers spent the day learning about their employees National Guard commitment to foster a culture in which all employers support the employment and military service of members of the National Guard and Reserve in the United States. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen/Released)

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